

Dear Families of Gilead Bible Church, *

As Christians approach retirement age, they often wonder what a Christian should do during the retirement years. Do Christians retire from Christian service when they retire from the workplace? How should a Christian view retirement?

Although there is no biblical principle that a person should retire from his work when he reaches a certain age, there is the example of the Levites and their work in the tabernacle. In Numbers 4, the Levite males are numbered for service in the tabernacle from ages 25-50 years old, and after age 50, they were to retire from regular service. They could continue to “assist their brothers” but could not continue to work (Numbers 8:24-26).

Even though we may retire from our vocations (even “full-time” Christian ministry), we should never retire from serving the Lord, although the way we serve Him may change. There is the example of two very old people in Luke 2:25-38 (Simeon and Anna) who continued to serve the Lord faithfully. Anna was an elderly widow who ministered in the temple daily with fasting and prayer. Titus 2 states that the older men and women are to teach, by example, younger men and women how to live.

One's older years are not to be spent solely in the pursuit of pleasure. Paul says that the widow who lives for pleasure is dead while she yet lives (1 Timothy 5:6). Contrary to biblical instruction, many people equate retirement with “pursuit of pleasure” if at all possible. This is not to say that retirees cannot enjoy golf, social functions, or pleasurable pursuits. But these should not be the primary focus of one's life at any age.

Second Corinthians 12:14 states that the parent ought to save up for the children. But by far the greatest thing to “save up” is one's spiritual heritage, which can be passed on to children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Generations of descendants have been impacted by the faithful prayers of an elderly family “patriarch” or “matriarch.” Prayer is perhaps the most fruitful ministry outlet for those who have retired.

The Christian never retires from Christ's service; he only changes the address of his workplace. In summary, as one reaches “retirement age” (whatever that is) the vocation may change but one's life work of serving the Lord does not change. Often it is these “senior saints” who, after a lifetime of walking with God, are able to convey the truths of God's Word by relating how God has worked in their lives. The psalmist's prayer should be our prayer as we age: “Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come” (Psalm 71:18).

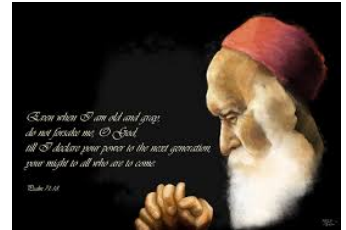
God Bless,

Pastor and Helen Moy

* <http://www.gotquestions.org/retirement-Christian.html>

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親愛的基列主內弟兄姊妹，



當基督徒接近退休年齡，他們往往不知道一個基督徒應該在退休後做什麼。難道基督徒從工作場所退休時，他們連同作為基督徒的侍奉也要退休？

雖然聖經沒有定義一個人到了某一定的年齡就要從工作上退休，但這裡有利未人在會幕工作的例子。在民數記四章，利未人男性在25-50歲要在會幕工作，50歲後，他們會從正規的侍奉中退休。他們會繼續協助弟兄，但不能繼續任職工作(民 8:24-26)

我們可能從事業上退休(即使是全職基督教事工)，但侍奉主我們卻永不應退休；雖然，侍奉的方式會改變。在路加福音2:25-38，聖經有這個例子：有兩位年老的人，西緬和亞拿，他們乃繼續忠心地侍奉主。亞拿是年老的寡婦，她在殿中守候，禁食祈禱。提多書二章提到老年人和年老婦人要作年輕人的榜樣，教導他們如何生活。

很多人退休等同於盡可能"追求享樂"。聖經的教導卻不一樣。人年老時不應單單追求享樂。保羅說：那好宴樂的寡婦、正活著的時候，也是死的。這並不是說退休的人不能享受高爾夫，社交節目，或追求享樂；意思是人在生命任何年齡中，"追求享樂"不應該是生命的主要焦點。

哥林多後書12:14指出，父母該為兒女積財。時至今天，最大的積財乃是一個人所擁有的屬靈遺產，這可以傳給孩子，孫兒，使後代能被年長家長的虔誠祈禱所影響。祈禱可以成為那些已退休者最豐富的"成先啟後"屬靈遺產。

基督徒永不會從侍奉基督中退休，他只是將他工作的地址轉換。總括來說，一位達到退休年齡(不管它是什麼職業)的基督徒，職業可能會改變，但服侍主的工作不要放下。往往正是這些“資深聖徒”，在他們畢生與神同行之際所經歷的一切，能為神傳達真理。當我們進入高齡時，願詩人的祈禱亦是我們的禱告：“神阿、我到年老髮白的時候、求你不要離棄我、等我將你的能力指示下代、將你的大能指示後世的人”(詩篇 71:18)。

願主祝福你們

梅牧師及師母

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